

1 which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and request an idle time
2 retrieval from said schedule server, wherein a degree of significance is provided to said
3 participants respectively so that schedules of said participants are grouped in the order of said
4 degree of significance to thereby produce the idle time corresponding to said degree of
5 significance.

1 11. (Amended) [~~The~~] A schedule management system, [according to Claim 6]
2 comprising:

3 a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of equipments
4 reserved by ones of said participants in different groups; and
5 a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule server,
6 which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and request an idle time
7 retrieval from said schedule server, wherein said schedule server comprises databases which
8 store schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of said
9 participants, and a multistageous idle time retrieval unit which divides schedules registered
10 for participants and equipments into a plurality of groups and retrieves an idle time common
11 from one group as a retrieval condition for retrieving an idle time common for another group
12 of said plurality of groups.

1 --15. The schedule management system according to claim 10, wherein said
2 schedule server comprises a communication controller which provides registration for a
3 special group, and wherein said idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and
4 equipments in said special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving said idle time.

1 16. The schedule management system according to claim 15, wherein said
2 schedule server further comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in
3 accordance with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of
4 groups.

1 17. The schedule management system according to claim 10, wherein said
2 schedule server comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in accordance
3 with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of groups.

1 18. The schedule management system according to claim 11, wherein said
2 schedule server further comprises a communication controller which provides registration for
3 a special group, and wherein said idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and
4 equipments in said special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving said idle time.

1 19. The schedule management system according to claim 18, wherein said
2 schedule server further comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in
3 accordance with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of
4 groups.

1 20. The schedule management system according to claim 11, wherein said
2 schedule server further comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in
3 accordance with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of
4 groups.--